CONSUMER TIME

BETTER HEALTH FOR RURAL AMERICA

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER!

4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

5. MUSIC: OPENING THEME

6. SOUND: PHONE RING

7. HARRY: (WORRIED) Hello. Operator. Give me 209, please. 209. (TO WIFE) Don't worry, now, Mable. I'm sure Dr. White... (TO PHONE) Hello! Hello, Mrs. White? Is Dr. White there? Oh...I see. Well, this is Harry Stevens, and our kid's awful sick...No...I don't know what he's got. When'll the Doctor be back? Oh...then I guess we'll have to do the best we can until...(SLOW) All right...O.K., Mrs. White...Goodbye...

8. MABLE: (TIGHT VOICE) What did she say, Harry?

9. HARRY: (DISCOURAGED) He's out on a lot of cases, and he probably won't get home tonight at all...

10. MABLE: But Harry...we've tried every doctor we know...

11. HARRY: Yeah. All three of 'em.

12. MABLE: What are we going to do? Bobby's fever is going higher all the time...and he's coughing so...

13. HARRY: What can we do! There just aren't any doctors, that's all.

14. MABLE: I'll get another ice pack...and give him some more cough medicine...

15. HARRY: I tell you, Mable, it's a crime. We move out to the country where it's healthful for Bobby...where there's plenty of fresh air and sunshine. But when he does come down with something...what happens! There just aren't any doctors to take care of him. And I'll bet there isn't a trained nurse in this whole county.

16. MUSIC: BRIEF ACCENT

17. ANNCR: Are we a healthy Nation? Are our doctors...hospitals... medical facilities adequate...are they improving? To be sure, our big cities today have magnificent hospitals and medical centers...fine doctors...better housing. Our big cities have careful disease control. But what about the health of rural America?

18. NARRATOR: Farmers...people in small towns...country people...are beginning to realize today that all is not perfect with health in our rural communities.

19. ANNCR: Today on CONSUMER TIME...our story is...Better Health... for Rural America...

20. MUSIC: BRIDGE AND DOWN

21. FREYMAN: But is there something wrong with rural health? I always thought the country was such a healthful place to live. The wide open spaces...plenty of sunlight...fresh air... peace and quiet...

22. JOHN: The country is a healthful place to live. It has all these good things you mention...and more. But listen to this...

23. NARRATOR: Out of all the 18 and 19-year-old boys called up for the draft during the war...many more farm boys were turned down because they didn't measure up to military standards. Fifty-percent more farm boys...were 4-F.

24. JOHN: In the last war, the story was the other way. Is the health of our rural youth going downhill?

25. NARRATOR: The draft boards' figures aren't the only sign that rural health isn't all it should be.

26. WOMAN: Among babies and small children the death rate is higher in the country than it is in large cities. And the death rate of mothers is higher too.

27. NARRATOR: There are more deaths from typhoid fever, malaria, diptheria, pellagra, and pnemonia in the country and in small towns, than in larger cities.

28. WOMAN: Yet these diseases are ones which modern science and sanitation are best able to prevent...and cure.

29. NARRATOR: Farm work is a lot more dangerous than many people realize. Thousands of people working on farms are killed every year. Many, many more thousands are permanently disabled in farm accidents.

30. WOMAN: But many of these deaths and permanent injuries might have been prevented by greater regard for safety on farms; good hospitals, and medical care...in rural areas!

31. NARRATOR: A half a century ago, the American farmer could claim a death rate about 50 percent below that of his city cousins. Today, he can claim hardly a 10-percent advantage.

32. JOHN: These are statistics...but they're more than that. They are people...people who have suffered...people who have died of illnesses and accidents...many of which could have been prevented...or cured.

33. WOMAN: And this story is one for all the Nation to hear...not only the farmer; not only the small towns and country communities...but for the big cities as well. For city populations are made largely of people who have left the country.

34. MUSIC: BRIDGE, DOWN UNDER, AND OUT

35. FREYMAN: But I don't understand what's wrong! What's the matter with rural health? Why should there be problems like that?

36. JOHN: There are many reasons.

37. NARRATOR: It is true, first...that many rural families need better living conditions in general...better food, clothing, and shelter...if they are to be healthier.

38. WOMAN: But a lot of suffering and sickness could be stopped if rural areas had more medical care...and better sanitation.

39. NARRATOR: There are simply not enough doctors...there are not enough dentists; not enough trained health workers today in rural communities.

40. WOMAN: There should be at least one doctor to every one-thousand people...yet even before the war there were over a thousand counties averaging only one doctor to serve seventeen-hundred people.

41. NARRATOR: And during the war...in many communities, there was only one doctor to attend as many as ten thousand people.

42. FREYMAN: But I've always hard about what a wonderful man the old country doctor is. And what a heroic job he does...traveling all over...treating so many different kinds of ailments.

43. NARRATOR: Yes that's true. But that famous figure...the old-time country doctor with his black bag and his horse and buggy... is fighting a losing battle today. His forces are not being replenished fast enough...or well enough...by young well-trained graduates from medical school.

44. FREYMAN: New doctors aren't going into rural communities?

45. NARRATOR: Not nearly enough of them...nor nurses either...nor dentists...

46. FREYMAN: But why not?

47. NARRATOR: You can understand why not. These younger medical graduates want to work with modern technical, equipment, good hospitals, and make professional contacts which they need to do a good job. These things they find in the big cities.

48. FREYMAN: But there should be modern hospitals...and good medical equipment in small towns too.

49. NARRATOR: That's exactly it...there should be, but there aren't. Four out of every ten counties in our Nation haven't even one satisfactory general hospital.

50. FREYMAN: And it's beginning to be quite obvious...that many doctors and dentists and nurses who left rural areas to go to war...will not return to those communities.

51. NARRATOR: Unless the people who live in these communities do something to encourage them to come back.

52. MUSIC: BRIEF BRIDGE...HOLD UNDER AND FADE OUT.

53. NARRATOR: Do you know what a county health department is?

54. FREYMAN: Why...yes...

55. NARRATOR: A good county health department can go a long way towards helping people stay healthy. It can teach them facts about healthy living, good sanitation, good nutrition.

56. WOMAN: It can teach farm safety...child care...home nursing... It can see that community sanitary laws are carried out; it can quarantine people who have contagious illnesses; it can vaccinate and innoculate people against disease.

57. NARRATOR: But there were hundreds of counties, just before the war, which had no health department at all, and many others had only weak, understaffed departments. Many are hidden away in dingy basements, or old back bukldings...where no one ever thinks of them. No wonder people say...

58. WOMAN: The county health department? Why would I go there? That's just for poor folks.

59. NARRATOR: But the county health department is intended to serve the whole community.

60. WOMAN: Whatever type of health service you think of...there is less of it in the country than in the cities. Even the public md medical clinics, which can be used by "welfare" patients in cities...are seldom found in small towns and in rural areas.

61. NARRATOR: So...these shortages in health services and facilities mean this. They mean that rural people get less doctor and dentist care, less hospitalization, fewer benefits from public health agencies. This in turn means more disease...more chronic ailments that go untreated. Higher death rates among mothers and children...and many, many other health problems.

62. FREYMAN: But why? Why should it be that rural health services are poor?

63. NARRATOR: Why should it be? There is one main reason. It is economic Rural areas don't have the wealth of cities. The income is lower. People can't afford to pay for hospitals and medical centers.

64. WOMAN: The less money, the fewer nurses; the fewer public medical programs; the poorer housing and sanitation. The less money in a community, the fewer doctors...

65. HARRY: (FILTER) Hollo, Mrs. White? Is Dr. White there? He won't get back tonight! He's got to! Look, our boy is awful sick... he's got a fever and a cough and the doctor's just got to get over here! (AD LIB FADE)

66. MUSIC: CROSSFADE IN, BRIEF BRIDGE...AND OUT UNDER

67. NARRATOR: But...with only one doctor...for maybe several thousand people and many of these people long country miles apart...you can't count on much help whenever you need it.

68. FREYMAN: But look. You say that in many ways rural people aren't as healthy today as city people. That more young boys from farms were 4-F in the draft. You say that's because of so few doctors and nurses; inadequate hospitals...and poor public health services. And then you say that the reason for all this is that there isn't as much money in rural areas as there is in the big cities...to support modern medical facilities. Tell me this, then. What can be done? Can anything be done to improve this situation on our farms... and in our small towns?

69. NARRATOR: Indeed something can be done. And it can be done by the people. By you and your next-door neighbor...and his next-door neighbor. The community must recognize its problem...the people should get together; talk about it and plan...(FADING VERY SLIGHTLY) Because no one person alone...

70. SOUND: (CROWD FAINTLY BEHIND. SNEAKS IN BELOW)

71. MAN: (TO CROWD) No one person alone can build a hospital...or a new building for the health department... No one man can bring more doctors into the community....but when we all get together...the heads of our local farm groups, our county Agricultural Council, our local doctors and church societies and women's clubs...when we all get together...we can form a Community Health Committee!

72. SOUND: CROWD APPLAUSE...FADE DOWN UNDER

73. WOMAN: The first job of our Health Committee will be to decide what needs to be done. Then we must get all the facts before all the people...so they'll be ready to help when the time comes for action...(FADE VERY SLIGHT)

74. MAN: I'd suggest we get help from our State Health Department, and from the United States Public Health Service.

75. WOMAN: And our own community doctors will certainly give us plenty of advice and information.

76. MAN: The Health Comittee better look into the matter of getting some of this war surplus medical equipment. I understand a lot of hospital equipment and medicines...are being released by the Army.

77. WOMAN: And we've got to make plans to build the new health center.

78. MUSIC: SNEAK IN BEHIND. HOLD UNDER

79. MAN: You know...I'm right proud of us and our new Health Committee! Just shows what folks can do when they get together. I mean now here we were with nothing. No nearby hospital...county health department buried down in the court house basement. Only old Dr. White to take care of the whole town... And him with no equipment to speak of.

80. WOMAN: Well don't be talking so high and mighty. We haven't got much yet.

81. MAN: I know...but we've got plans! We've got ideas! We got all the folks wanting to do something about it.

82. WOMAN: Of course...that's something.

83. MAN: Why that's half the battle. Look, we've got one big problem. We've got to get some young doctors out here in this community. Boys back from the war. We've got to get some nurses...a dentist...at least one more dentist. How're we going to do that? We've got to have a good, big modern health center. We've got to have equipment. We've got to get 'em office space..maybe we can get that free from someone...

84. WOMAN: Sounds like we aim to lure 'em out here, all right.

85. MAN: Sure we do. They aren't going to lure themselves. But most of all, we got to have plans, and we've got to want to do it. Then we can get help from our State Government, and we can get help from the United States Government. Believe me, Mable, in a couple of years you won't even know this place. We'll be the healthfulest crowd of folks in seven counties.

86. MUSIC: UP AND OUT

87. NARRATOR: Some communities throughout the Nation...now have organized to improve their health facilities.

88. WOMAN: One of the best known of these is Elk City, Oklahoma, where the Farmers' Union Hospital Association owns and operates a cooperative hospital.

89. NARRATOR: And then, in the Sandhills section of Nebraska, a rural health association has started a prepayment plan for health services.

90. WOMAN: These people brought a doctor, on salary, to a sparsely settled area, where there were no physicians.

91. NARRATOR: Then they established a small clinic, and brought in a public health nurse...with the help of the State health department.

92. WOMAN: In certain sections of Utah, the same thing is being done. In other states, farm bureaus have enrolled their members in group insurance plans...

93. NARRATOR: The Farm Security Administration carries on a group health plan for farm people.

94. WOMAN: And throughout the country, doctors, dentists, nurses, and druggists have worked heroically in rural communities to bring people as much medical attention as they could. They have worked as individuals...

95. NARRATOR: Recently...many communities throughout the country have become interested in a health insurance plan. Because merely building a hospital...or getting more doctors into a community...is of little use if the people in the community don't have money to pay for them.

96. WOMAN: But rural people in many counties...are finding a way to ease payment of their medical bills. And that way is through group health insurance.

97. JOHN: Would you mind telling us...how health insurance works?

98. NARRATOR: Medical statistics show that not all the families in a community have a lot of sickness every year. Only a few do. So if enough families get together...and each pays a certain amount into a pool, or a common fund, the fund is usually enough to take care of the bills of families who do need medical care that year.

99. WOMAN: Polls have shown recently that the majority of people in America want some kind of health insurance.

100. NARRATOR: Recently, President Truman made a proposal. He proposed that there be a nation-wide spreading of the cost of sickness. How to do this? By expanding our present social security system to include Health Insurance!

101. WOMAN: The President recommended further...that health insurance, supported by contributions from earnings...should cover all persons who work for a living and their dependents...including farmers, and agricultural workers.

102. NARRATOR: That is a question for your Health Committee to study. The question of how health insurance...might best be provided in your community!

103. MUSIC: BRIDGE

104. FREYMAN: Now I have a question...

105. JOHN: Yes, Mrs. Freyman?

106. FREYMAN: Suppose I...in my community...wanted to get more doctors... and a public health nurse...people who had come back from the war. And we did form a health committee. What would we do first to find out how?

107. JOHN: First, you'd probably get the best help by writing to the United States Public Health Service, in Washington. Or your State Health Department.

108. FREYMAN: And how would we get surplus medical equipment?

109. JOHN: The U. S. Public Health Service will tell you about that, too.

110. FREYMAN: And suppose we wanted to build a small hospital...suppose we'd collected the money. How would we find out about plans and costs, and so on?

111. JOHN: The Federal Works Agency would be helpful if you're ready to discuss construction problems in particular. And your State Health Department, or again, the U. S. Public Health Service, can be helpful with blueprints and budgets.

112. FREYMAN: (LAUGH) I have so many questions!

113. JOHN: Yes. So I think it would be a good idea to get the publication called Better Health for Rural America. It's a 34-page, very complete document on just how to go about doing all the things you were asking about, Mrs. Freyman, and a good many more. It suggests ways to ease the payment of the medical bill, to construct needed health facilities, to get more doctors in your areas, and to improve rural health services in general.

114. FREYMAN: Well, I will get it, Johnny.

115. JOHN: But I would like to say...that this is specially prepared for health committees, and community leaders. Perhaps your community group already has a copy...if not, it should certainly have one.

116. FREYMAN: Want to tell how to get it, Holly Wright?

117. WRIGHT: Friends, if you're interested in improving the health facilities in your town or community...the publication called "Better Health for Rural America" will be most useful in helping you plan a course of action. It is a complete, illustrated 34 page document. Write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D.C. for your free copy. The edition is limited, so write only if a copy is not already available to your group. "Better Health for Rural America", CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D.C.

118. JOHN: Next week on CONSUMER TIME, we're going to hear the story of how food is transported throughout our Nation. We'll hear something about air transportation of foods...about new ways of packaging...and other new developments in transporting food from the farms of America...to you.

119. FREYMAN: Be with us then...for another edition of...

120. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

121. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

122. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER

123. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Christine Kempton, is presented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D.C.

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